

The Fitzrovia Partnership Renewal Ballot - Statement of consultation undertaken

Background

The Fitzrovia Partnership BID is in its first term, which operates until 31st July 2017 and therefore requires a renewal ballot to continue into a second term. The renewal ballot for this has been given the go ahead from The Fitzrovia Partnership board to take place in June/July 2017. The current BID area has an excellent track record of delivery since its establishment in 2012, is highly visible with a strong business mandate.

The Fitzrovia Partnership has a strong programme of business engagement throughout its work programme. Regular communication is undertaken with 100% of its members; keeping its membership updated as to the work of the organisation, events and activities in central London, opportunities and threats. The organisation manages a successful and well-attended business networking and insights programme.

Over 200 of The Fitzrovia Partnership members are directly engaged in one of more of the work programmes.

Member survey (2016):

Early soundings helped identify priorities and themes moving forward which appear in the renewal business plan.

Feedback

- Delivering a desirable place to work, live and visit by keeping streets clean, well maintained, free of anti-social behaviour and unlicensed commercial activity. 98% of respondents citing this as important or very important.
- Having a Collective Voice was identified by 85% of respondents saying it is important/very important that their interests are represented with Statutory Authorities. 89% feel that the timely dissemination of information is important/very important.
- Reducing Business Costs received significant support particularly from the Office Community, which reflects the national buying power of multiple retailers.
- Restaurants valued Feast of Fitzrovia and sought to increase this type of activity. This response was mirrored by the retail sector with the Festival of Furniture.
- The Partnership's Ambassador Team are very popular in the area particularly amongst retailers and have the highest visible presence in the area over Council Wardens, Safer Streets Team and the Metropolitan Police.
- The overwhelming concern across all sectors is business rates. 23 respondents cited business rates and rent concerns in free form text answers as the main issues facing their business over the next 5 years.

Geography

As part of The Fitzrovia Partnership renewal work a wider study area was identified to test the appetite of businesses on the hinterland of the current boundary. An encouraging level of interest was recorded in the areas of west Fitzrovia and towards Bloomsbury and Charing Cross Road.

Strategically a better alignment of current boundaries with other central London BIDs was deemed appropriate.

Following presentation and debate amongst The Fitzrovia Partnership Board, it was decided to identify areas to the west and east as future BID opportunities in their own right and therefore not include within the renewal programme. It was agreed to 'tidy up' the current boundary, specifically south-east Tottenham Court Road, Windmill Street, Alfred Place and Chenies Street.

Business Consultation: (Jan 2017 to May 2017)

Working from a draft Business Plan

100% of businesses invited to one to one meeting with a member of the team

98 meetings completed with members

100% of retailers and restaurants visited by a member of ambassador team

All businesses invited to The Fitzrovia Partnership business-to-business networking and business insight events;

All businesses received The Fitzrovia Partnership e-communications

100% businesses asked to verify their voter

Ballot: (June to July 2017)

Presentation of the final Business Plan

Electronic version of business plan sent to all BID members

Invitation to discuss business plan given to 100% of members

All BID members invited to Business Insight events

Hard copy of BID proposal distributed to all businesses

One to one meetings offered to all voters

Notice of Ballot sent to finalised voter list confirmed by LB Camden

The Fitzrovia Partnership ballot commences on 21 June 2017